

THE CONVERSION OF CHARLES WEIGLE

Republished November 18, 2014 (first published December 13, 2004) (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article) -

The biography of Charles Weigle can be found in the free eBook "Life and Music of Charles Weigle" at www.wayoflife.org.

Dr. Weigle was a Baptist evangelist and noted hymn writer. He entered heaven's gates December 3, 1966 at age 95, from Chattanooga, Tennessee. The following is from "The Victorious Life: Sermons by Dr. Charles Weigle" --

On the banks of the Walbash River stands the prosperous Midwestern city of LaFayette, Indiana, county seat of Tippecanoe County, and hometown of Purdue University. When Purdue was a young, growing school just two years old, Charles Frederick Weigle was born, November 20, 1871, into the family of a God-fearing, German-Lutheran baker and his wife. The Weigle family was composed of twelve members, five boys and seven girls; it was a typical German family. As a boy, young Charles Weigle was accustomed to hearing his father pray; and Bible reading was observed at family worship every morning immediately following breakfast. Charles Weigle was converted at the age of twelve after being under conviction for quite some time. The Methodist Church of LaFayette was having a series of revival meetings in a little frame church where his parents attended. A great number of his friends and playmates came under conviction and were going forward during the progress of the meeting. This made an indelible impression upon young Charles Weigle, even though he resisted longer than most of the others. Then one night a strong overpowering realization that he was lost came over him. The testimony of his conversion is as follows:

"I was born and reared in a Christian home. Every member of our family attended church services and went to Sunday School. We had family worship in the home every morning. I suppose I was about as good as the average boy of my age. I had a bad temper, however; and by the time I was 12 years of age, I was fighting with my brothers and the neighbor boys. While having trouble with an older brother, I cut him with a knife very seriously. I knocked a neighbor boy down with a ball bat "because he didn't play to suit me." On another occasion, while ringing a heavy dinner bell in a political parade, a young fellow who did not like the crowd I was marching with ordered me to put down the bell; and I brought it down on top of his head, and they carried him home to recuperate. My parents punished me severely for these misdeeds and warned me to stop fighting lest I be arrested and sent to prison, but I paid little attention to them.

"There came a day when I was arrested for my misdeeds and taken to court. As I sat alone and saw the crowd in the room waiting to see what the judge would do with me, I realized the seriousness of the situation. It appeared as if I were doomed to go to prison, for I was guilty. When the judge came in and took his place behind the bench, he looked down at my shrinking form and said with a voice that sounded like the knell of doom to me, 'Young man, have you an attorney?' I said, 'No sir, I haven't got anybody.' He looked over the courtroom and then motioned to a handsome young man to come forward, and said to him, 'You will kindly act as his attorney.' That handsome young lawyer came and sat down beside me and took charge of my case. "One thing that brought a little hope to my heart was the attitude of my attorney. He sat close to me and spoke to me with a voice that was full of tender sympathy. I felt that he was my friend and that he cared for me and wanted to help me. When I told him of all the mean things I had been doing and for which I had been arrested, he assured me that he would help me. All I had to do was to tell the truth and leave the rest with him. That seemed to relieve my mind some what.

"After the trial began, however, and one witness after another testified against me, I began to lose hope. One of them said I knocked him down with a ball bat and almost killed him. My attorney said to me, 'Did you do that?' I said, 'Yes Sir'. The next witness accused me of having seriously injured him with a heavy dinner bell, and my attorney again said, 'Did you do that?' I said, 'Yes Sir'. My own brother came to witness against me, declaring that I had used a knife on him and had almost taken his life. My attorney turned to me and asked, 'Have you been guilty of all these acts?' and I said, 'Yes, Sir, and a lot of other things they don't even know about.' He tried to relieve my fears by saying, 'Trust me - I'll help you.' "Finally, the prosecuting attorney rose up and, speaking to the judge, said, 'Your Honor, according to the evidence brought by these witnesses, the defendant is guilty of all charges brought against him. He is a potential murderer and a menace to this community, and we ask that he be placed in prison for a long duration of time.' Then my heart sank within me and I said to myself, 'There is no hope for me.'

"When my attorney arose to speak in my defense, I wondered what He could do for me. Looking at the judge, he said, 'Father.' That one word brought hope for me. Looking at his father, the judge, he said, 'Father, the defendant pleads guilty to every charge brought against him. He asks for mercy; and as his attorney, I plead for him. I believe that if the court will grant my plea, this young man will live a new and a better life.'

"I saw the judge rise to his feet as my attorney spoke. There was a look of love and kindness as he said, 'But my Son, the defendant is guilty. There is a penalty that must be paid, according to the law.'

"I'll take care of that and suffer the penalty,' said my attorney. And then, to my joy and amazement, the judge said, 'It is the decision of the court that, in response to the plea made by the attorney for the defendant, he be pardoned and set at liberty, with the

understanding that he show by his manner of life a due respect for the law and a kindness toward his neighbors.'

"I was free! My heart was filled with joy as I clasped the hand of my attorney and, with moist eyes, tried to express my gratitude. He placed his arms about me and, in a voice that sounded like the music of an angel's harp, he said, 'You and I will be friends forever. We'll be brothers; and whenever you need any help, you may come to me and I'll help you.' Since that day he has never forgotten me. We've been as close as brothers can be down through the years.

"Let me explain to you the fact that the courthouse where I had this wonderful experience was a little frame church during the progress of a revival, where the great truths of the Bible were being preached. One night, as I sat on a rear seat, the Holy Spirit, the High Sheriff of Heaven, arrested me and led me to the front in sight of all the people present. I was convicted and condemned, and confessed my guilt to Almighty God. There seemed no hope for me. My sins towered up before me. Then Jesus came and quieted my fears. He paid the penalty for all my sins and guilt. He pleaded my case in the high court of heaven and won my pardon. When this great truth dawned upon my mind, my heart was filled with gratitude and praise. There came a great love into my heart for my Saviour. That love has grown until He has the chief place in my life. Some day I expect to see Him face to face. That will be heaven for me. "We sing at times, 'What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear.' You will find this to be a reality when you put your trust in Him as your Saviour. He came into the world to save us from our sins and to bring peace and joy into our lives. He is the Friend you need."

NO ONE EVER CARED FOR ME LIKE JESUS
by Charles F. Weigle

I would love to tell you what I think of Jesus
Since I found in Him a friend so strong and true;
I would tell you how He changed my life completely,
He did something that no other friend could do.

All my life was full of sin when Jesus found me,
All my heart was full of misery and woe;
Jesus placed His strong and loving arms about me,
And He led me in the way I ought to go.

Ev'ry day He comes to me with new assurance,
More and more I understand His words of love;
But I'll never know just why He came to save me,
Till some day I see His blessed face above.

Chorus:

No one ever cared for me like Jesus,
There's no other friend so kind as He;
No one else could take the sin and darkness from me,
Oh how much He cared for me.

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